

North Thornton Natural Drainage Systems SEPA Determination of Non-Significance (DNS)

Description of Proposal

The Project is in the North Branch Thornton Creek basin in northeast Seattle and aims to provide water quality treatment of urban stormwater runoff by constructing bioretention facilities in City of Seattle (City) street Right-of-Way (ROW). This project is one of the stormwater-focused Natural Drainage System (NDS) Partnering projects identified in SPU's 2015 Protecting Seattle's Waterways Integrated Plan for addressing pollution from stormwater to Puget Sound and its tributaries and complying with the City's federal Consent Decree (Case 2:13-cv-00678). The Project will improve conveyance and drainage infrastructure and build on existing community improvement planning efforts to provide additional community benefits, including pedestrian and intersection improvements, as well as traffic calming.

The Project includes a retrofit of approximately five blocks of City ROW. The sites included in the 90 Percent Design manage runoff for up to 9.3 acres of effective impervious area. The Project proposes conveyance improvements and installation of bioretention facilities to capture and treat stormwater runoff prior to discharging into Thornton Creek, a tributary of Lake Washington. The Project includes two sites:

1. **Olympic Hills site** - This site ultimately discharges stormwater runoff to Littlebrook Creek, a tributary to North Branch Thornton Creek. Treated stormwater runoff will be infiltrated via bioretention facilities. Overflow from the bioretention facilities on 25th Ave NE and NE 127th St is directed to the existing ditch and culvert system along NE 127th St and overflow from the facility on 27th Ave NE connects to the existing on-block public storm drain (PSD). Overflows combine near the intersection of NE 125th St and 28th Ave NE and will continue east along NE 125th St towards Littlebrook Creek.
2. **Little Brook site** - 32nd Ave NE between NE 135th St and NE 137th St. Treated stormwater runoff from this site will be discharged to Littlebrook Creek, a tributary to North Branch Thornton Creek. The bioretention facilities on the Little Brook site are lined; therefore, both treated runoff and overflow are directed to the existing ditch and culvert system along NE 135th St and discharge into the culverted portion of Littlebrook Creek.

Proponent

Seattle Public Utilities
Seattle Municipal Tower Suite 4900
P.O. Box 34018
Seattle, WA 98124-4018

Location of Proposal

The Project is in Section 21, Township 26N, Range 4E in street ROWs on various blocks in the northeast part of the Thornton Creek Watershed. The finished Project would be constructed entirely in these street ROWs in the City of Seattle, King County, Washington:

- Olympic Hills site:
 - 25th Ave NE between NE 127th St and NE 130th St
 - NE 127th St between 25th Ave NE and 27th Ave NE
 - 27th Ave NE between NE 125th St and NE 127th St
- Little Brook site:
 - 32nd Ave NE between NE 135th St and NE 137th St

Temporary construction easements and activity may impact the ROW shoulder and adjacent properties during the construction activities.

Lead Agency

Seattle Public Utilities, the lead agency for this proposal, has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

This Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal for fourteen (14) days from the issuance date below. A copy of the environmental checklist is available online at:

<https://www.seattle.gov/utilities/neighborhood-projects/north-thornton-natural-drainage-systems>

Public and Agency Comments

Comments on this DNS must be submitted by July 3, 2026 and must be sent by email to:

Nathan Hart, SEPA Responsible Official
Seattle Public Utilities
nathan.hart@seattle.gov

Signature: _____
Electronically Signed
Nathan Hart

Issue Date: June 18, 2026

Appeals

Appeals of this DNS must be accompanied by an \$120 filing fee and must be filed by 5:00 p.m. on July 13, 2026. Please see the Office of the Hearing Examiner web site for Temporary Operating Rules During COVID-19: <http://www.seattle.gov/hearing-examiner>